

MINUTES
GREEN BAY TRANSIT COMMISSION
“Special Meeting”
Wednesday, October 28, 2016
901 University Avenue, Commission Room
8:15 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Roger Kolb, Chair; John Withbroe, Vice Chair; Kevin Kuehn, Secretary; Alderman Randy Scannell, Emily Ysebaert, Ron Antonneau and Sierra Spaulding

EXCUSED: April Herlache, Transportation Supervisor

STAFF PRESENT: Patty Kiewiz, Transit Director; Essie Fels, Recording Secretary; Larry Sterckx, Maintenance Manager; Pam Manley, Business Grant Manager; Brandon Lensmire, Operation Supervisor; Cindy Tappy, Compliance Coordinator; Celestine Jeffreys, Mayors Chief of Staff

OTHERS PRESENT: Lisa Conard, Brown County Planning; Alderman David Nennig, Aaron Weinschenk, Jon Shelton and Skyler Toyme

1. Call the meeting to order

Chair R. Kolb called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

J. Withbroe made a motion to approve the October 28, 2016 agenda. S. Spaulding seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Discussion/Action: Free Rides on Green Bay Metro for Voting Day

Director Kiewiz stated last week's meeting there had been a request for Transit to consider providing free transportation on Election Day's. Metro had received a few comments which had been forwarded on to the Transit Commission as well as an article that was brought up by Lisa Conard, Brown County Planning. Director Kiewiz had checked across the state on what other Transit are providing this service and the only one is La Crosse. They have reported not seeing a whole lot of change; status quo.

Brown County Planning prepared a map of the Transit System all the dots are the polling sites that were including in an email for the Commission.

K. Kuehn inquired if there was a voting site on UWGB campus. Director Kiewiz commented yes, on Election Day.

R. Scannell stated our business here is to promote public transportation. Anytime we can get involved with the community that is what we should do. This would be good public relations; we may have a positive effect civically speaking, and make the awareness of voting. We should look at this as free fares not a as a free transit day. If we could get sponsors to assist in paying for the service like we do with the Packers Game Day Routes. Defiantly would want to use this as a marketing tool.

S. Spaulding commented voting happens in 11 days; we are running short of time for the ability of getting sponsors this short notice. If it is possible with the cost of running the service to be about \$1,300 for the day; round it up a bit for the marketing. We are looking at around approximately \$3,000. If there is room to absorb that cost for this and market as an open day for transit.

S. Spaulding stated when other groups come in here looking for a service to benefits one group of people; this will be a benefit everybody and will be a low risk.

E. Ysebaert commented she was in agreement with Randy and the sponsorship to operate on Election Day. She is in support.

K. Kuehn inquired if it is a possibility of one of the organizations or students to do a study to gather data from this election that we could use as a base to measure the usage of this service. There are a number of ways to get out and vote. He is not in support; he has a financial fiscal responsibility to this organization.

Motion made by R. Scannell, second by K. Kuehn, to suspend the rules and open the floor to the public. Motion carried.

Aaron Weinschenk-3038 Emmalane Drive – commented in favor of the proposal.

John Shelton-1019 Emilie Street– commented in favor of the proposal.

Motion made by R. Antonneau, second by J. Withbroe, to return to regular order of business. Motion carried.

E. Ysebaert stated there are a lot of polling places that are located on the bus routes. There is a lot of opportunity for people to take advantage of this. She supports this. It is a great thing for the community; she doesn't feel it is about increasing voter turnout, but it is sending a message to the community to get out and get involved. She inquired if we had money to market this; do we have the funds to support this if we don't have a sponsor.

Director Kiewiz stated Transit budgets each year a dollar amount in the marketing account. As of date there funds in that account; we do have something planned yet for the rest of the year for

the parade and holiday. Final result would be a reduction in fares for that day? Staff does feel that it will be a slight impact on fares on Monday and Wednesday.

C. Jeffreys stated before you give your deliberations that the Mayor's office supports this free day on Election Day. The Mayor's office can work with Green Bay Metro on some financing. She also agrees that there is not enough time to get sponsorship, but could make a small contribution.

R. Antonneau stated we need to work with everyone on this and we need to move forward to make this successful, but I do agree we need to do it.

K. Kuehn inquired what is the demographic of our ridership.

Director Kiewiz commented as a system whole; we have more transit dependent individuals utilizing public transportation then we do choice riders by a large percent.

Chair R. Kolb stated he is in agreement it is a good promotion but as far as getting more people from those neighborhoods to vote is going to be very difficult.

J. Withbroe commented his past driving experience as an operator is that individual would get on the bus and they weren't aware of the free day. He suggested if we can't get a sponsor for this election to study it for late spring election.

R. Scannell stated he could support it going forward as an experiment as we are getting some funding from other economic sources.

S. Spaulding commented if we market this by press releases and social media we can spread the word and we can make a difference.

K. Kuehn stated he appreciates Sierra's passion and Aaron for coming in today. He has a level of responsibility for the budget here and since we don't have that allocated it would come from some other place; he would be in favor of looking at this come spring in coordinated effort with the Chamber of Commerce, the City of Green Bay, and possibility some other municipalities and some way of measuring how this will be successful and what will the results be. He will not support it 8 days before the election. We need to create this to be a model for other Transits. We need to be a leader.

Motion made by R. Antonneau, second by J. Withbroe, to suspend the rules and open the floor to the public. Motion carried.

Aaron Weinschenk-3038 Emmalane Drive – additional comments made in favor for free transportation on Election Day.

Skyler Toyme-3376Downham Court– commented in favor of the proposal.

Motion made by R. Scannell, second by E. Ysebaert, to return to regular order of business.
Motion carried.

R. Scannell made a motion to provide free fares for this upcoming Election Day. E. Ysebaert seconded the motion.

R. Antonneau commented the working poor came forward and wanted 2nd shift opened up to pick them up on Saturdays with public transportation. We did not have the money to support it. We need to do this right. We need benchmarks.

R. Scannell inquired if we have enough funding to absorb the cost if we ran free rides on Election Day.

Director Kiewiz stated it would need to come out of a fund that has access dollars in it, like the marketing fund or something on that aspect. It was not specifically budgeted for.

R. Antonneau asked if it affects the money that is returned to municipalities at the end of the year. Director Kiewiz stated yes.

Chair R. Kolb stated he would like a roll call vote.

I's: Commissioners S. Spaulding, Emily Ysebaert, and Alderman R. Scannell

Nay: Commissioners J. Withbroe, K. Kuehn, and R. Antonneau

Chair R. Kolb stated he would be the final vote and he votes nay. It is 4- Nays to 3- I's. Motion carried.

4. Establish the date of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Transit Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at 8:15 a.m.

5. Adjourn

Motion made by K. Kuehn seconded by R. Antonneau, to adjourn at 9:25 a.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Essie Fels
Recording Secretary